Government to monitor austerity measures

*411. SHRI YERRA NARAYANA SWAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) what are the guidelines issued to various Ministries to observe austerity measures and reduce expenditure:

(b) how does Government monitor such guidelines;

(c) whether it is a fact that many Public Sector Units are acquiring luxury vehicles and not observing austerity guidelines;

(d) what steps will be taken to enforce austerity measures;

(e) whether ostentation by Government Departments and Public Sector Units is sending a wrong message on Government's austerity programme; and

(f) the steps proposed to enforce austerity in expenditure on costly equipment, costly travel and luxury vehicles?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) to (f) Keeping the Government expenditure under control is a continuous process and instructions in this regard are issued from time to time. These instructions include reduction in posts, ban on air travel by first class, ban on accommodation in hotel suites while on tour, reduction in consumption/ expenditure on petrol, restriction on OTA, entertainment, decorative lighting & electricity, restriction on purchase of vehicles, etc. Instructions also exist that luxury cars, such as Contessa, NE Fiat, Maruti 1000 should not be purchased. Financial Advisers attached to different Ministries/ Departments are required to ensure that the economy instructions issued by the Government are scruplously followed. Separate instructions exist that Public Sector Units should avoid obstentatious expenditure and observe austerity measures. Instructions have also been issued that the Public Sector Enterprises should not purchase expensive cars.

Threat to Doordarshan by Satellite Communication

*412. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of Government has been drawn to a newsitem published in the Hindustan Times. dated 25th July, 1994 under the caption ""Doordarshan unfazed by invasion from skies";

(b) if so, whether due to high competition of Satellite communication, Doordarshan has failed to compete; and

(c) if so, what are the plans and objectives of Doordarshan to compete with Satellite communication?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) The primary task of Doordarshan is to inform, educate and entertain the people of this country. Without deviating from its assigned task, Doordarshan will, as it has done in the past, continue to respond appropriately to competition from different quarters.

Encashment of fraudulent cheques and dividend warrants

*413. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:
SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the encashment of fraudulent cheques and dividend warrants, drafts and pay orders, a lucrative business